countries. Steps are already under way to follow up on the necessary activities to commence implementation of the various projects. In addition, a liberalised trade regime to enhance bilateral commercial exchanges in general and Nepal's exports to India in particular, is being facilitated.

Proposal to issue Tax Free Road Bonds

594. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to refer to the answer to U.Q. 3749 given in Rajya Sabha on 11th September, 1996 and state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under considertion of Government to issue Tax Free Road Bonds on the lines of Railway Bonds; and

(b) if so, the details thereof;

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The proposal is at conceptual stage sand it is too early to indicate the details thereof.

Break-Down of Telecom Facilities in West Godavari District

595. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a total break-down of telecom facilities in November, 1996 due to cyclone in West Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether any steps have been taken to restore such telecom facilities in West Godavari district;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the machinery available during such emergency to restore telecom facilities due to frequent break-downs in telecom operations in rural areas; and

(e) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) There has been a large scale break-down of telecom facilities in West godawari District of Andhra Pradesh.

(b) and (c) The restoration work is in progress on war footing. Resources have also been diverted from all over the country to restore services.Following restoration works have already been completed;

(i) No. of local exchanges restored completely— 82 out of 137.

(ii) No. of exchanges restored partially — 55. These will be fully restored as soon as AC Power Supply is restored by Electricity Authorities and trunk lines are repaired.

(iii) No. of local lines restored— 7488 out of 13528 affected.

(iv) No. of STD statiens— 62 out of 88.

(v) No. of Trunk systems restored— 39 out of 70.

(d) and (e) In rural areas whenever major break-downs occur due to natural calamities like floods and cyclones men and materials are diverted from nearby Divisions for immediate restorations. For restoring the trunk systems quickly, Digital Radio systems are installed as far as feasible for giving immediate relief.

Speedy Transmission of Mails

596. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are taking steps for the speedy transmission of parcels, money orders and mails;

(b) whether Government have also been making efforts to deliver the parcels, money orders and letters expeditiously; and

(c) if so, the progress made as on date and by when these services are expected to be the modernised in the entire country?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) to (c) Improvement and modernisation of mail transmission and delivery is a continuous process. The Department takes various steps from time to time in this regard. No specific time limit can be set in this regard. Some of the steps taken are:—

— Sorting of machinable mail in Bomaby and Madras on Letter Sorting Machines to expedite sorting.

— Installation of Very Small Aperture Terminals (VSATs) to speed up transmission of money orders to remote, hilly and backward areas of the country.72 such VSATs are already operational.

— A new service called Express Parcel Service has been introduced for speedier transmission of parcels from the 8 metropolitan cities to major State capitals. Besides, the Speed Post Service is strengthened for speedier transmission and delivery of premium mail.

— In the case of mails posted in bulk, the mailers are encouraged to do pre-sorting to ensure expeditious transmission of such mails to the destination.

— Special arrangements are made to sort and despatch Corporate Mails and Festivals Greeting Mails posted in the peak season of June to December.

— Rationalisation of mail processing by prioritised and segmented handling of mails of different categories according to their time-sensitivity.

— Regular check of paymeny of money orders, particularly in villages and effects to ensure supply of adequate funds for money order payment.

— The transmission and delivery of mails and money orders is continously monitoried at various levels and routing of mails is revised periodically after review.

— Use of Private Airlines, in addition to Indian Airlines for conveyance of mails.

— Supply of mopeds to postmen serving in heavier beats of selected cities.

— Computarisation of registration sorting work in major Mail Offices in a phased manner.

— Modernisation of Mail Offices to improve the efficiency of operation by supplying modern operational equipments and furniture.

Security Forces Posted in North-Eastern States

597. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state the details of the number of security forces now posted in the North-East States; State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR): Central forces are made available to the States to assist them in maintaining public order. The level of deployment depends upon the requirement of each state and the overall availability of forces. Keeping in view the present security scena in North-East, the Central forces have also been deployed there. However, it may not be appropriate to indicate the details of forces or level of deployment in public interest.

मध्य प्रदेश में टेलीफोन कनेक्शन हेतु प्रतीक्षा सूची

598. **श्री राघवजी:**
श्री अजीत जोगी:

क्या संचार मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि: